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READERS SAY

Young Cites History to Back Blast at MacArthur

Answering the published letter of Fricis Rungis, I repudiate his statement that I made a "deplorable accusation in blaming Gen. Douglas MacArthur for offering 'poor advice' to President Harry S. Truman."

Fricis Rungis would be well advised to read Gen. MacArthur's "Reminiscences," wherein he admits receiving bad intelligence from the CIA and relying on it. In November 1950 in Lawson's works, "The United States in the Korean War," "In your opinion" President Truman asked Gen. MacArthur, "is there any chance that the Chinese might enter the war on the side of North Korea?"

MacArthur shook his head. "I'd say there's very little chance of that happening. They have several hundred thousand men north of the Yalu, but they haven't any air force. If they tried to cross the river our air force would slaughter them. At the most perhaps 60,000 troops would make it. Our infantry could easily contain them. I expect the actual fighting in North Korea to end by Thanksgiving. We should have our men home, or at least in Japan, by Christmas."

Gen. MacArthur's "Reminiscences" and Lawson's authoritative history show that at the time Gen. MacArthur discarded the advice of American Air Force intelligence and accepted the intelligence report of the CIA which was 100% inaccurate, there were already more than 100,000 Chinese troops just across the Yalu in North Korea. Two hundred thousand additional troops were ready to cross the Yalu.

Rungis, in his ignorance of history, wrote

of my "loose judgment." My statement is historically correct. When American forces in North Korea were caught, as two armies, with a mountain range between them, they fought bravely but were driven back with heavy losses. This sudden surprise attack on our forces started in late 1950 within a few days after Gen. MacArthur, relying on the bad intelligence report furnished by the CIA, made his optimistic prediction.

It will be remembered that at Clark Air Base, nearly eight hours after Gen. MacArthur had word of the calamity at Pearl Harbor, American war planes were still grounded and were sitting ducks for the waves of Jap bombers. They were destroyed on the ground.

Facts, not Fricis Rungis' appraisal, will determine whether Gen. MacArthur was the greatest general of the 20th century.

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